



February 23, 2009

Engineering the future

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Reader Submitted

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NEWS RELEASE

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Local students venture to IUPUI for Project Lead The Way student conference

(Hagerstown, Ind.) February 23, 2009 - A cooperative effort between the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at IUPUI and the Indiana Department of Education brought together over 300 students from 17 Indiana high schools at the IUPUI campus in Indianapolis last Friday, February 20. Fourteen students from Hagerstown High School were among the attendees at the Project Lead The Way (PLTW) student conference, held during National Engineers Week.

The PLTW student conference is part of a larger curriculum initiative that promotes pre-engineering courses for high school students. The PLTW program allows participating students to take courses through which they can earn scholarship opportunities and potentially receive college credit at IUPUI. While the curriculum was first instituted in New York State high schools in 1997, Indiana now boasts the most participants in the program.

Dr. Tony Bennett, Superintendent of Public Instruction, was the keynote speaker for the event. "Project Lead The Way is a great example of a program that engages future Hoosier engineers while they are still in high school, helps them prepare a career path as they start thinking about college, and shows them the sort of cutting edge projects they may one day be working on," said Bennett. "We're proud to be a part of it and hope to see it continue to expand."

At the conference, students had the opportunity to engage in two career themed sessions as well as a "hands-on" session. "Hands-on" sessions presented by IUPUI faculty, staff and students focused on topics such as bridge design, digital forensics, metal casting, advanced manufacturing and electronic music. For the career themed sessions professionals presented on various subjects. Those who presented had careers related to mechanical engineering, computer engineering, electrical engineering, construction technology, biomedical engineering, motorsports engineering, computer graphics and more.

Ron Curry, PLTW teacher at Hagerstown, attended the conference with the students. "IUPUI has all kinds of opportunities to offer. I bring my students to the PLTW conference so they can step out of our rural community and see that they're not alone in the study of engineering. The conference gives

them opportunities to interact with students from all over the state,” said Curry. “The best part is that while they are at the conference, many of them have these “ah-ha” moments where they see the real world connection to what we’re doing in class.”

Hosting the conference for the fifth year, IUPUI was very pleased with the turnout and feedback from the event. “Bringing students, teachers, and professionals together to participate in events like this are fantastic opportunities for the university and all that are involved. We are fostering the growth of interest in engineering and technology while connecting students and instructors with curriculum that raises the standards of learning and provides a distinct advantage,” said Dr. Yurtseven, Dean of the School of Engineering and Technology, IUPUI .

About the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at IUPUI:

The mission of the Purdue School of Engineering and Technology at IUPUI is to be one of the best urban university leaders in the disciplines of engineering and technology recognized locally, nationally and internationally. The school's goal is to provide students an education that will give them the leverage to be leaders in their communities, industry and society. For additional information on the School of Engineering & Technology, go to <http://www.engr.iupui.edu>.

About Project Lead The Way:

Project Lead The Way (PLTW) is a not-for-profit organization that promotes pre-engineering courses for middle and high school students. PLTW forms partnerships with public schools, higher education institutions and the private sector to increase the quantity and quality of engineers and engineering technologists graduating from our educational system. The PLTW curriculum was first introduced to 12 New York State high schools in the 1997-98 school year. Today, the programs are offered in some 3,000 schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. For more information about Project Lead The Way, visit <http://www.pltw.org>.
